

FEBRUARY 12, 1816.

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Read twice and committed to a committee of the whole House on  
Wednesday next.

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## A Bill

*For quieting and adjusting claims to Lands in the Mississippi  
Territory.*

1     *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of*  
2     *the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That*  
3     any person or persons owning any British grant or patent for  
4     lands lying in the Mississippi Territory, north of the thirty-  
5     first degree of latitude, which have been regranted by the  
6     Spanish government be, and they are hereby authorized to  
7     file with the commissioner of the general land-office, all the  
8     evidence of their claims to such lands, on or before the first  
9     day of November, one thousand eight hundred and seventeen.  
10    And it shall be lawful for the claimants, by themselves or

11 their agents, to withdraw the original title papers, and all ev-  
12 idence relating to such claims, from the registers of the land-  
13 offices, within the Territory aforesaid, and which may have  
14 been filed by the claimants, according to law.

1 SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That the secretary of  
2 state, the attorney general, and the commissioner of the gene-  
3 ral land-office be, and they are hereby authorized and em-  
4 powered to examine the claims thus filed, and to decide thereon  
5 according to law. And it shall be the duty of the commis-  
6 sioners aforesaid, to proceed to examine and decide on the  
7 claims aforesaid, whenever it shall appear to them that claims  
8 to the amount of one hundred and forty thousand acres have  
9 been filed with the commissioner of the general land-office, in  
10 pursuance of this act.

1 SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That the act of filing the  
2 claims aforesaid with the commissioner of the general land  
3 office, in pursuance of this act, shall be considered as con-  
4 clusive evidence of the acceptance by the claimants, of the  
5 provisions of this act; and the decision of the commissioners  
6 aforesaid shall be final, and shall have all the effect in law of  
7 a decision of the supreme court of the United States.

1 SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That in all cases where  
2 the commissioners aforesaid shall decide in favour of the

3 claimant, the commissioner of the general land-office shall  
 4 issue to the claimant, a certificate of confirmation, specifying  
 5 the quantity of land confirmed by such decision; and it shall  
 6 be the duty of the commissioner of the general land-office, to  
 7 deliver such certificate of confirmation to the claimant, his  
 8 agent, or attorney, which shall be received in lieu of, and in  
 9 full compensation for, the land so claimed.

1 SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted,* That the certificates of  
 2 confirmation authorized by this act, shall be received at any  
 3 of the land offices of the United States, in payment for any  
 4 public lands of the United States, at the rate of two dollars  
 5 per acre for every acre contained in such certificate of con-  
 6 firmation: *Provided,* That such certificates shall not be re-  
 7 ceived in payment for any lands sold before the date of such  
 8 certificate; nor shall any discount be allowed for prompt  
 9 payment, in such certificates: *And provided also,* That nothing  
 10 in this act shall be so construed, as to authorize any British  
 11 grant or patent to be filed with the commissioner of the ge-  
 12 neral land-office, for the purposes mentioned in this act,  
 13 which may be barred by the provisions of any former law.

1 SEC. 6. *And be it further enacted,* That if any person claim-  
 2 ing lands in the Territory aforesaid, north of the thirty-first  
 3 degree of latitude, by virtue of any grant or patent derived

4 from the British government, shall neglect or refuse to file  
5 the same with the commissioner of the general land-office, as  
6 is provided by this act, neither such grant or patent, nor any  
7 other evidence of such claim, shall ever after be considered or  
8 admitted as evidence in any court of the United States, against  
9 any grant derived from the United States, or against any title  
10 legally and fully executed, derived from the Spanish govern-  
11 ment ; any act or acts to the contrary notwithstanding.